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Abstract for the Faculty of Medical Sciences Teaching and Learning day

Title: Promoting recall by use of KeePad Audience Response Systems
Author name: Dr Marina Sawdon
Author department: School of Medicine, Durham University
Author email: marina.sawdon@durham.ac.uk
Other authors: White PM
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One common complaint in the National Student Survey is perceived lack of adequate feedback to students on their learning and exam performance. In part this may be due to misunderstandings by students as to what constitutes feedback. However, it is also due in part to the daunting task of providing individualised feedback to large numbers of students when staff-student ratios are falling.

We have explored the use of Audience Response Systems in providing immediate feedback in learning situations. This technology employs portable individual key pads which communicate through wireless signals with hardware and software which is readily installed in any learning environment. Questions are created through PowerPoint, and can be addressed to students at any point during the teaching session. This can be used to check and reinforce understanding, and any problems can be addressed immediately. Students can make an interactive choice, yet retain the security of anonymity.

The technology can be used to study the decay of knowledge at different time points after delivery of the learning experience, and we have found that retention is better than by conventional teaching and assessment methods. The low cost and flexibility of this approach makes it ideal in a number of teaching settings.

Keywords: recall, memory, decay, learning